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- Identity, Ethnicity and Ethnogenesis: Reintegration of the Crimean Tatars
- Russia Reassessed

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Cover Photograph by Dodge Billingsley.
Northern Alliance soldiers on the road 300 meters north of the fortress, preparing to reinforce existing troops along the north wall of main gate

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INSURRECTION AT QALA-I JANGI

Dodge Billingsley

By mid November 2001 there were only a few pockets of Taliban across northern Afghanistan. The last major city still in Taliban hands was Konduz in the northeast part of the country. In typical Afghan style, the surrender of Konduz to the Northern Alliance was negotiated while Northern Alliance forces tightened the circle around the besieged city. Within the ranks of the Taliban holding the city were a number of foreign fighters, the majority were said to be Pakistani and various Arab nationals. However, there were also supposed to be Chechens, Uzbeks, Uighurs and other foreign nationals within the ranks.

Any surrender of the city would have to take into account these foreigners, which was problematic since, not being local, they could not simply lay down their weapons and return to a life in Afghanistan outside war, or jump over to the side of the Northern Alliance. The Northern Alliance's new ally, the U.S., was in Afghanistan hunting al Qaeda and was extremely interested in foreigners and any possible links to terrorists networks operating abroad—these foreigners had to be accounted for. In this political climate Taliban leaders negotiated for the surrender of the foreigners in their ranks in addition to Konduz itself.

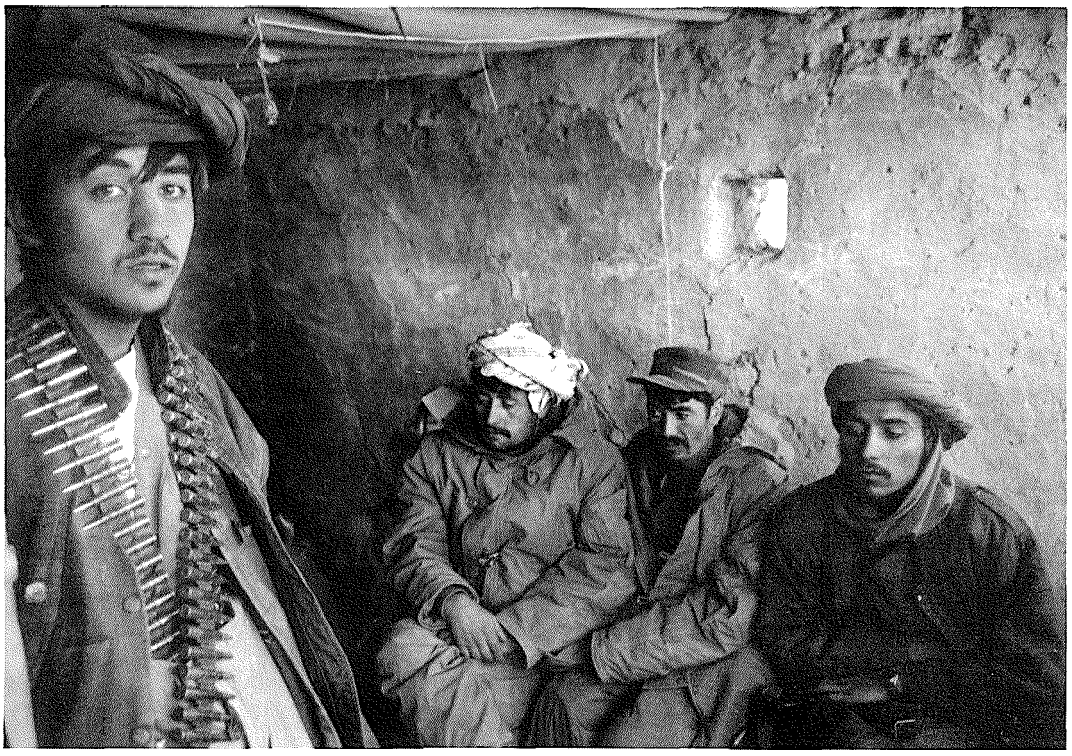
It was finally negotiated that one such Taliban group, numbering as many as 500, would surrender to the warlord of Mazar-e Sharif, ethnic Uzbek General Rashid Dostum. Actually, Dostum was quite active in the negotiations for Konduz as it appears that he wanted to flex his muscle in the north and perhaps take part in the "land-grab" that was going on amongst Northern Alliance rivals in Afghanistan following the retreat or elimination of Taliban forces.

Saturday, 23 November

Saturday afternoon the foreign Taliban arrived northeast of Mazar-e Sharif. They arrived earlier than expected, but this could have been due to the fact that they had not traveled to the pre-designated meeting place, but in fact stopped many miles short. There were a few hours of negotiations and then it seemed that the matter was resolved. They were told to throw their weapons in a truck and were considered disarmed. However, there were immediate signs of trouble in the desert meeting place as one Talib detonated a grenade killing himself and two other Taliban, wounding a Northern Alliance commander and an ITN reporter covering the surrender.

According to Amir Jan, a Taliban defector who actually helped negotiate the surrender of the foreign troops destined for Qala Jangi, there were a couple of critical mistakes made in the surrender process leading up to the meeting in the desert. First, he claims that the foreigners were to have surrendered in Erganak, 12 miles west of Mazar-e Sharif. Instead, they traveled to a point northeast of the strategic city causing confusion as to whether or not this was in fact the group surrendering. It was evident that another mistake occurred during the surrender negotiations, this time by Mullah Fahzel, the overall Taliban commander at Konduz. He instructed the foreigners to turn in their weapons but did not tell them that they would also be taken into custody. It appears that many, if not all, of the foreign Taliban believed they would turn in their weapons and then go free.

After some confusion, the matter was resolved, and, under the watchful eye of U.S. Special Forces, General Dostum ordered the prisoners loaded on trucks and transported to Qala-i Jangi, a nineteenth-century fortress located southwest of Mazar-e Sharif. General Dostum did not accompany the prisoners to Qala-i Jangi but instead continued on to Konduz to participate in the securing of that city from Taliban control. (There are many numbers floating around as to the size of the foreign Taliban escorted to Qala-i Jangi. By some accounts it seems there were no more than five trucks, which means that the number of Taliban could not be more than 250-300,



Northern Alliance troops loyal to General Rashid Dostum in a mud hut atop the northeast tower on Monday morning, awaiting orders.

assuming 50 to a truck. However, by most accounts the number of 500 Taliban stands firm.)

The situation did not get better once the Taliban reached the fortress, roughly an hour's drive from their meeting place in the desert. Again a Talib produced a grenade from an undisclosed place and detonated it, killing himself and killing or wounding another Northern Alliance officer, Nadir Ali. Sometime later another Talib detonated a grenade killing himself and a senior Hazara commander, Saeed Asad. By now darkness was upon the fortress and Dostum's guards responded by herding the remaining prisoners into an underground cell complex beneath the "pink house"—a building in the center of the fortress's southern courtyard—where they were left overnight.

Sunday, 24 November

That morning a CIA operative known only as Dave and fellow agent Johnny (Mike) Spann arrived at Qala-i Jangi to begin interrogating the prisoners. They arrived in separate vehicles which they parked in the north half of the fortress near an entrance to the southern courtyard. The prisoners were led from the cell structure into the southern courtyard one by one. According to American Taliban John Walker his hands were tied as he surfaced from the cells below. It is notable that there still had not been a thorough search of the Taliban prisoners.

For the CIA and the intelligence effort of the war, the prisoners were the first big capture of foreigners taken in the seven week war and it was likely Spann and Dave were anxious to find out who was in the group. Dostum's chief of intelligence, Sayid Kamil accompanied the CIA men into the southern courtyard and watched as they began talking to the prisoners.

At some point during the interrogations, the Taliban revolted and killed CIA officer Spann, wounded Dostum's Intelligence Chief and killed a number of Northern Alliance guards as they took possession of the southern courtyard. The other CIA operative, Dave, managed to get out of the southern courtyard and run to a main building along the north wall. Also inside the main building were the Red Cross, who arrived to make sure the prisoners were being treated fairly, and at least one TV crew, including German ARD TV.

An intense firefight ensued between the Taliban inside the southern courtyard and the Northern Alliance troops guarding the prisoners. By all estimates, it appears that there were only about 100 Northern Alliance soldiers in the fortress when the uprising occurred. During the struggle, Taliban insurgents set about freeing their comrades still under restraint and found a large cache of weapons and ammunition stored along the south side of the wall dividing the northern and southern courtyards.

Armed with mortars, RPGs and small arms, they took control of the southern courtyard and continued a brisk exchange of fire with Northern Alliance troops gathering along the north wall and roof of the main building. Two Northern Alliance T-55 main battle tanks assumed positions along the fortress's

north wall and courtyard below, and began firing 100mm shells into the Taliban-held southern section.

Whether or not it was lost in the melee or just left in their vehicles, Dave was missing his communications gear when he reached the main building and was forced to use the German TV's satellite telephone to call for help. Around two o'clock U.S. and British Special Forces personnel arrived at the fortress. After conferencing briefly with Northern Alliance commanders, and Dave still holed up in the main building, they assumed positions on the northwest towers and the roof of the main building and began orchestrating combat air support.

At around 4:00 p.m., the Special Forces teams guided the first of several air strikes on the fortress, while Dave, wounded Northern Alliance troops, and the journalists, climbed over the back wall from their position along the inner parapet and exited the fortress to the north running to a nearby road. Meanwhile the air strikes continued with mixed success. A number of the ordnance missed the southern courtyard but Northern Alliance soldiers on the spot claimed the air strikes were instrumental in containing the Taliban to the southern section of the fortress. However, in possession of the weapons facilities, the Taliban insurrection was far from over. In fact, it was just beginning.

Monday, 25 November

By the next morning the battle lines were firmly drawn. Taliban fighters still controlled the southern courtyard—roughly half of the approximately 500-meter-long fortress—while Northern Alliance troops had reinforced their positions at the main gate, along the northern walls and just outside the southern walls of the fortress. A T-55 main battle tank remained on the northeast tower from the day before, while a second tank continued to hold its position below in the courtyard, barrel pointing into an alleyway between the southern and northern courtyards.

Taliban fire from the southern courtyard was significant, as they had managed to acquire rockets and mortar systems in addition to other small arms. However, the lower interior wall dividing the northern and southern courtyards severely reduced the Taliban forces' field of fire. Much of the firing was directed through the alleyway, since attempts to fire over the interior wall sent rocket and rifle fire arcing over the external north wall and into nearby fields.

At around 11:00 a.m. the U.S. and British Special Forces again arrived in an attempt to retrieve Spann's body. A group of 11 personnel proceeded to the main gate and then broke into two positions within the fort designated CAS 1 (Close Air Support) above the main gate and CAS 2 at the northeast tower. A QRF position (Quick Reaction Force) was set up on the road 300-400 meters north of the fortress.

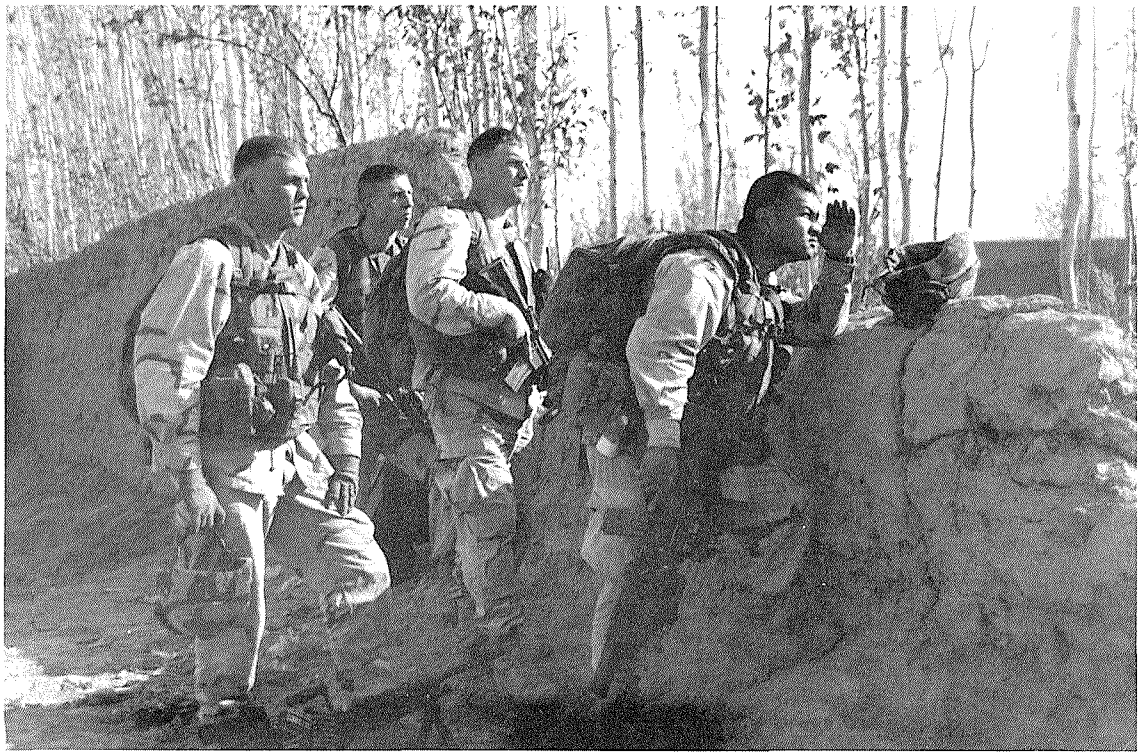
Twenty minutes later a 2000 lb. Joint Direct Attack Munition, or JDAM, GBU-32 struck the north wall, only meters from the northeast tower, basically on top of CAS 2. All five U.S. personnel were wounded, the most serious with a fractured pelvis. It is possible that British SAS and SBS troops were also wounded in the incident but it is unclear as the British government failed to say so. The fact is, the trajectory of the bomb as it hit the wall caused the wall to lift up underneath CAS 2, throwing them in the air but likely saving the entire team from death. Two Northern Alliance soldiers inside the T-55 tank on the northeast tower were instantly killed when their tank was flipped by the blast ripping the turret from the hull. Dozens of other Afghans scurried off the wall stumbling into nearby cotton fields, many of them bloody and covered in dust. Most of the Northern Alliance soldiers along the north wall left the fortress fearing further air strikes.

The errant bomb strike marked the end of any Afghan or U.S. military operations during the remaining daylight hours on Monday. However, there continued to be a steady stream of mortar and rocket fire coming from the southern courtyard. At dusk Special Forces and other U.S. personnel returned to the fortress to talk to Northern Alliance commanders and survey the bomb damage. They were also there to discuss the next phase of the operation.

That night (Monday), two AC-130 gunships pounded the southern courtyard with 40mm and 105mm rounds. At about 2:30am they hit an ammo dump, detonating the entire cache of weapons forcing them to leave the airspace above the Qala-i Jangi.

Tuesday, 26 November

The mood among Northern Alliance soldiers at the fortress was optimistic Tuesday morning on the heels of the AC-130 strikes. Some Afghan soldiers suggested there might be a handfull of Taliban still alive and in fighting condition but no more than that.



U.S. troops from the 10th Mountain Light Infantry Division at the QRF position prior to Monday's air strike.

Still preparations were being taken for a final assault on the southern courtyard. Northern Alliance General Majid Rozi gave instructions to his commanders for what he said would be the final push to retake the southern courtyard and end the insurrection. The attack was scheduled to begin at 10 am but ran a little late as again U.S. and British Special Forces personnel arrived, pulling into the main gate. They reestablished their position on the roof of the main gate. Aircraft could be heard overhead and it appeared that they were prepared to call in further strikes if for some reason the battle escalated out of control or the Northern Alliance lost the upper hand.

Northern Alliance soldiers massed inside the main gate and along the north side of the interior wall. Additional Northern Alliance troops were positioned outside the exterior wall, just south of the fortress. Once put into effect, the plan called for Northern Alliance troops to storm the Taliban-held southern courtyard from both the northern courtyard and over the southern exterior wall. A T-55 and another T-62 main battle tank were brought into the fortress through the main gate to support the push into the Taliban-controlled area, while Northern Alliance troops surrounded the fortress to keep the Taliban from escaping over the exterior wall.

The fighting commenced in fits and starts, and dead and wounded (including one Taliban wounded by shrapnel, whom Northern Alliance soldiers characterized as Tajik) were carried out through the main gate or over the southern exterior wall, put into commandeered taxis and jeeps and driven away, presumably to a hospital.

By noon the Northern Alliance had penetrated the southern courtyard through the alleyway and controlled the western half of the southern courtyard all the way to the pink house, as well as the parapets above on the southern wall of the fortress. However, the east end of the courtyard, protected by woods and various buildings, was not easy to clear and the Taliban continued to put up stiff resistance. Eventually Northern Alliance troops worked their way down the wall and began clearing the remaining courtyard meter by meter.

Progress was frequently interrupted by soldiers stopping to loot the dead and scavenge weapons and other valuables off the battlefield much to the anger of their commanders.

The troops' hesitancy to move forward was well founded as it seemed that just when the battle appeared to be over, Taliban emerged from the stables or other buildings, opening fire on the

Northern Alliance soldiers en route to the fortress, which is visible in the background.

advancing Northern Alliance soldiers. This led to the retreat of Northern Alliance back to the parapet above and the firefight would begin all over again.

Unwilling to risk more close-quarters combat, the Northern Alliance moved in the T-62 tank, and fired a series of rounds into suspected Taliban positions in the eastern part of the courtyard. By dusk Northern Alliance forces had overrun the courtyard. The insurrection at Qala-i Jangi was all but over. Sometime later, the Special Forces retrieved Spann's body from the southern courtyard with the help of Northern Alliance personnel.

The Aftermath and Conclusion

General Dostum, who had been in Konduz during the entire uprising arrived back in Mazar-e Sharif in the early morning hours on Wednesday. He met dozens of journalists who descended on the fortress for the first time. Hundreds of bodies lay strewn about the fortress: Taliban and Northern Alliance.

The next day, Thursday, Northern Alliance troops discover Taliban still holed up in the cell structure below the pink house. Two days later, Saturday, after rocketing, pouring oil, and then water, into the cell structure below, 86 Taliban emerge from below into the courtyard. There are two U.S. citizens among them.

The Qala-i Jangi uprising will likely be remembered as one of the most brutal moments of the war, in part, due to the graphic media coverage and the scenes of bodies strewn about the courtyard. However, there will also continue to be a number of troubling questions regarding the uprising. Was it preventable and was it necessary for so many to die in the process?

While it has been alleged that the battle was a deliberate massacre of the type that has plagued Afghanistan for decades, the debacle was more a result of a series of mistakes. First, the Taliban prisoners were never adequately searched. At least one killed himself and a Northern Alliance commander by grenade in the desert meeting place northeast of Mazar-e Sharif before being taken to Qala-i Jangi Fortress on Saturday night. That attack should have prompted a thorough search, but none was made then, or after the prisoners' arrival at the fort, or on Sunday morning prior to being brought out into the courtyard.

Second, when the revolt began the Northern Alliance was severely undermanned, by all accounts outnumbered by at least 4 to 1. Furthermore, the

fortress, except for the cell structure below the pink house, was never designed as a prison. The Taliban were housed less than 20 meters from stockpiled weapons—although they were probably unaware of this upon entering the fortress.

Third, it seems the prisoners were given no adequate guarantees for their safety, and being foreigners, may have felt they would surely be killed and therefore had nothing to lose. Taliban who survived the uprising claim that some in the group cried as they were being led into the courtyard Sunday morning—certain they were going to be killed. Once the uprising began Northern Alliance soldiers on the scene seemed to indicate that now, since the Taliban had instigated the insurrection, they would finish it—there would be no more attempts to get the remaining Taliban to surrender.

This reaction to the uprising is similar with what General Dostum's men had to say about the Girl's School massacre in Mazar-e Sharif less than two weeks prior. In that event, members of Dostum's forces claim that negotiators were sent into the school to discuss the terms of the surrender but were killed by the Pakistanis during the negotiation process. At which point General Dostum's forces relentlessly attacked the school until all the 600 Pakistanis inside were killed.

Finally, the CIA operatives in the fortress on Sunday did not have adequate backup once the uprising began—no quick reaction force outside the fortress walls. In addition, they were without vital communications equipment and were forced to rely on a journalist's satellite phone to bring in the Special Forces. There were also rumors during the battle that the initial cause of the uprising may have been aggressive reporting. However, since the journalists within the fortress on Sunday morning were not present in the southern courtyard when the revolt began, there has been speculation that this reference to journalists may refer to the CIA operatives working among the prisoners with their digital camera.

Serious questions also remain regarding the number of prisoners involved. If, as General Dostum's Political Officer, Olim Razum, claims, up to 500 Taliban were in the fortress at the insurrection's beginning, then a significant number remain unaccounted for. Pakistanis have resurfaced in Pakistan after the incident claiming to have been part of the group to taken to the fortress. They claim that they escaped during the night and eventually made their way out of Afghanistan. Taliban were lynched blocks from Qala-i Jangi by local residents and at least three were found dead outside the fortress walls near an open drain pipe.

In the final analysis, the battle of Qala-i Jangi provides a window into how the war had been conducted up to the more recent Operation Anaconda—Taliban versus Northern Alliance, supported by Coalition Special Forces and air power. It will also be remembered as a bloodbath. However, the incident should be considered in light of the series of grave errors that led to its tragic conclusion.

Dodge Billingsley is the director of Combat Films and Research and was present at the uprising. He witnessed the errant U.S. bomb strike and the retaking of the southern courtyard by Northern Alliance forces.

IDENTITY, ETHNICITY, AND ETHNOGENESIS:
The Reintegration of Formerly Deported Crimean Tatars

Shehla Burney

The geopolitics of land, ethnicity, and identity have indelibly defined the global resurgence of new ethnic nationalisms at the turn of the millennium, most with horrific consequences of "blood and belonging,"[1] while a few have resulted in a more positive sense of ethnogenesis, or the rebirth, reclaiming, and reinventing of ethnocultural identity and national self-awareness. From the Himalayas in Kashmir, to the plains in Spain, and the once green valleys of Kosovo, among other volatile regions of the world, "home" and "land" have become lost icons for which millions live and die. As borders and boundaries are usurped, reclaimed, redrawn in almost all the geographic regions of the world—the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa—ethnic hatred, tribal warfare, and territorial battles have taken their horrendous toll.[2] Ironically, as transnational migration continues to soar, for more and more marginalized ethnocultural minorities the homeland remains only a dream, an imaginary state, an unfulfilled reality. But, imaginary homelands are more real in exile.

The Tatars of Crimea,[3] with a history and culture dating back to the 1440s, are a formerly deported Turkic people whose undying dreams of returning to "Vatan" or the "homeland" on the healing waters of the Black Sea, have actually materialized after more than half a century of exile, displacement, and relentless struggle. The Crimean Tatars' sustained effort at reclaiming their homeland, reinventing their cultural identity, reviving their lost language, reaffirming their cultural practices, retrieving their heritage, and retelling their (hi)stories is a remarkable testament to their spirit and sense of community. Their long and checkered history is the story of survival. It is the story of the gradual process by which a dispersed and diasporic ethnoreligious community with origins in the Crimean Khanate of the Middle Ages develops a Modern, secular transnational identity and a political attachment to the homeland,[4] despite a history of more than 200 years of oppression, displacement, and major social and political upheaval.

The means by which the Crimean Tatars have managed to forge a national identity and maintain their links to the home territory over time and space and hardships from the nineteenth-century Ottoman

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1. Ignatieff, Michael, *Of Blood and Belonging* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993).

2. The Basques, the Kosovars, the Palestinians, the Kurds, the Tibetans, the Kashmiris, and the Quebecois, among many other ethnocultural peoples around the globe, are fighting for autonomy and political independence, with hopes of acquiring a much dreamed of "homeland"., with a distinct society and a separate sense of identity. These movements have cost thousands of lives and bloodshed. East Timor, was recently proclaimed a new state after years of Timorese resistance against former Portuguese colonization and Indonesian domination.

3. See Allworth, Edward A., ed., *The Tatars of Crimea: Return to the Homeland* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998) for a discussion of the origins, language and cultural and spiritual heritage of the Crimean Tatars. In his preface, Allworth makes a key point about the usage of the definite article to refer to *the* Crimea: "The book title also embodies a shift in terminology away from the old Western usage that regularly placed the definite article the ahead of the place name or ethnonym Crimea... like most independent countries and autonomous regions, now stand alone without the article that formerly introduced , and some felt, demeaned them" p.xi.

4 . See Williams, Brian G., *The Crimean Tatars, The Diaspora and the Forging of a Nation* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001).

Empire, where they were dispersed after the annexation of the Crimea by Russia in 1783, to the mass deportation by Stalin to Siberia and Central Asia in 1944, to the international political arena of the twenty-first century is indeed exemplary of the role that exiled peoples and the diasporas can play in what I call, "*(re)*presenting" themselves: "For representation is the means by which society re-presents itself. Re-presentation is a form of naming: it is a methodology for reclaiming voice, for reaffirming identity... Re-presentation stems from the desire to break the hegemony of stereotypes and construct an identity that understands geopolitical, postcolonial realities."[5]

This reclaiming/retrieving of the homeland by the Crimean Tatars and the rekindling/reinventing of a proud and peaceable ethnic identity is indeed a remarkable *re-presentation*. For a positive reaffirmation of ethnicity and identity can often work as a corollary to undercut extreme ethnocentrism of the deadly kind as seen in the former Yugoslavia. However, the early warning systems need to be observed carefully. If attention is not paid, the Crimean situation too has the potential of escalating into another Kosovo. News of the poverty, prejudice, poor living conditions, overt racism, ethnic conflict, and the denial of political rights of citizenship, of education and employment, faced by the Crimean Tatars, and their sharp resistance to this hegemonic politics of location, has fortunately not yet hit the headlines for its fifteen minutes of infamy, soon to be relegated to the back pages of memory. The media in the West tend to report only disasters from the developing world, as Mrs. Indira Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India, told me prophetically in an interview in 1984,[6] a few months before her assassination, which was splashed across the front pages of the world, while her "green revolution," which eradicated famine and made India self-sufficient, had been totally ignored.

In this paper I shall first provide a brief historical background of the Crimean Tatars and then discuss the steps being undertaken by the Tatars to "re-present" themselves, suggesting key reasons for their relative success in reclaiming a new life in an old homeland bereft of the comforts of home. The proactive measures taken by the Ukrainian government in preventing major interethnic conflict during the last hectic decade, such as inviting the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and several international and local NGOs to assist in the integration and development project, shall also be described, based on my own experiences of working with students, teachers and community members at the UNDP school in Kamenka, outside Simferopol, the capital of Crimea, and in various other settlements in Bakshiserai, Belagorsk, Sudak, Sari Suv, and other cities.

Home and Exile

The Crimean Tatars claim to be the indigenous people of Crimea. The powerful independent Crimean Khanate, established in 1475 by Khan Mengli Giray I, which turned into a dynasty, with Bakshesarai as its capital, fostered a period of Tatar cultural flowering in literature, architecture, and the arts. In 1783, the Crimea was annexed by the Russian Empire. At this time, there were an estimated 250,000 Tatars, or 90 percent of the population, as opposed to only 11.9 percent[7] living in the peninsula today. After the Russian take-over thousands of Tatars were killed, and thousands of others fled to the Ottoman Empire. Land confiscations by the Russian imperial power from the Tatar landowners and farmers impoverished the people further, reducing their native population. Displacement and migration were heightened in the aftermath of the Crimean War of 1853-56, as more and more Crimean Tatars found refuge in the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and other places.

A brief surge of indigenization, or "Tatarization" as it came to be called in the Crimea, occurred between 1920 and 1928 on the basis of early Soviet Leninist nationality policy. This came to be known in Tatar circles as the golden age of the Soviet Crimea. During this period nationality districts and village soviets were formed to enhance the status of

5. See Burney, Shehla, "Writing Diaspora: The Pedagogy of Re-presentation" in *Across the Atlantic: The Story of Portuguese Canadians* (Toronto: Difference Press: 2001), p. vi.

6. Burney, Shehla, "Gandhi: A Woman Charged by Energy", Interview, *The Toronto Star*, November 5, 1984, B4.

7. Certain areas, however, have a larger percentage of Tatars: Simferopol, 22.2%; Stari Krym, 27%; Bakhchiserai, 21%; Belogorsk region, 32% of the total population.

minorities in places where they formed a majority of the population. Guarantees were made for their separate cultural development, for primary education in the native language and for local self-expression in political institutions, including the right to use their own language in court. Led by Veli Ibrahimov, the Tatars were brought into all levels of the Crimea's government and land was returned to its former owners. Tatarization took different forms. Elementary schools were established with the Tatar language (still in Arabic script) as the medium of instruction. An Oriental Institute to study the Crimean Tatar language and literature was established as were four teachers' colleges. Tatarization was directed towards cultural preservation, particularly the salvaging of Tatar cultural and religious monuments that had been ravaged under Tsarist rule. Publishing in the Tatar language flourished and Crimean Tatar cultural artefacts were rediscovered. Tatars who had fled during the Civil War and War Communism period (mostly to Turkey) were granted total amnesty and encouraged to return home. This "renaissance" ended abruptly with the rise of Stalinism in 1928.[8] According to the 1939 census there were 218,879 Tatars in the Crimea, making up 19.4 percent of the population, still the second highest group after the Russians who comprised 49.5 percent of the population.[9] Thus, a substantial majority of Tatars continued to live on the Crimean coastline until World War II.[10]

On May 18, 1944, as Hitler's armies marched into Crimea, the Tatars were deported en masse by the Stalinist regime to Siberia and Central Asia with other minorities such as Germans, Bulgarians, Armenians and Greeks, allegedly for collaborating with the Nazi army. Ironically, the Nazi army razed to the ground more than 100 Tatar villages.[11] Within 60 hours, 187,859 people were transported from the Crimea in 71 charter trains. While the Tatar men served in the Soviet army, the women, children and the elderly were rounded up from their homes and shipped on crowded trains for the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia. About 5,000 other Tatars were sent to work in mines. It is believed that hundreds died en route, while others perished from malnutrition and disease in exile. The Crimean Tatars believe this to be ethnic cleansing and have made international protests to bring these atrocities to light. In the late 1950s a national movement for the restoration of rights to the Crimean Tatar nation emerged in the deportation settlements. Hundreds of petitions were circulated and signed and action groups were organized. In 1964 the Crimean Tatars began formally lobbying Moscow for the return of their homeland, restoration of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, and for political rehabilitation, agitating for the retrieval of their lost cultural and ethnic identity. By 1973 appeals and campaigns were officially successful, but it was not until Ukrainian independence in 1991, after more than half a century of exile and dislocation, that the formerly deported Tatars began to slowly uproot themselves from Central Asia to be officially returned to their homeland. They, however, arrived to find that they no longer possessed their farms and lands, that others occupied their ancestral homes, that they were now a marginalized minority in the changed demographics of Crimea. In a country deprived of the old infrastructure of social and material well-being after the collapse of the Soviet Union, they faced discrimination, prejudice and poverty. There were few jobs or social services available, despite the Ukrainian government's best efforts at employing Crimean Tatars in the state-owned sector, which ironically, could not pay regular or adequate salaries because of the poor economy. Moreover, devaluation caused the meagre savings of the Tatars to dwindle further. As Lilya Budzhurova, editor in chief of the Crimean Tatar newspaper, *Avdet*, and a popular poet, noted in an address to the Harriman Institute in 1998:

8. See Mogocsi, Paul Robert, *A History of Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), pp. 572-582.

9. Figures are taken from *The Crimea: Deported Citizens Their Return Settlement and Social Adjustment*, O.A. Gabrielian, V. P. Petrov (Simferopol: AMEHA, 1997), p. 56.

10. See Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Ukraine A Historical Atlas, Toronto:* University of Toronto Press, 1987.

11. Information and lists posted on International Committee for Crimea website www.iccrimea.org/reports/december10.html.

I would like to merely remind you that as a result of a policy of genocide that was perpetrated for centuries, the final stage of which was the mass deportation in 1944, my people have been deprived of statehood, homeland, cultural heritage, as well as historical and religious memorials.[12]

Between 1991 and 1995, 256,959 Tatars were returned to their homeland, upsetting the fragile post-Soviet political and economic apple-cart. The stream of repatriation has continued steadily, bringing the total to nearly 300,000 returnees, more than half of the 500,000 living in exile. With the growing numbers of returnees each year, some giving up relative prosperity and good jobs in Uzbekistan to come home, selling off lands and belongings, uprooting themselves yet again, ethnic tensions have emerged in an already harsh socio-economic climate. It has created a new dynamics and demographics. These ominous questions of history and power, place and identity are breeding mistrust and dissension which is quietly brewing in the fledgling new settlements of the Crimean Tatars, many without electricity and hot water, on unpaved, muddy roads, on the outskirts of cities.[13] In the early years of repatriation hundreds of returnees were living in tents and "dug-outs," without food or medicine. Now most Crimean Tatars are building their own homes, brick by brick and room-by-room, over the years with grit and determination and visions of the future, despite the present squalor, much to the consternation of the local residents who begrudgingly call these dwellings, "mansions." However, whole new neighbourhoods are slowly taking shape with mosques, "home schools" and other signs of territorial rights. A few collective and state-owned farms have been set up in some of the new localities of the repatriated Tatars. About half of the Crimean Tatars, most of them highly educated and skilled professionals who are unemployed, have tried to set up small businesses; others are planting gardens, while still others are volunteering for community work and school teaching. Despite insufficient funding, a Crimean Tatar theater has been established, folk music festivals and youth camps have been held, and the development of the Tatar National art gallery is ongoing. A few Tatar schools have been opened but a lot more are needed. (See "Education" below.)

In short, in the wake of past and present inequities, injustices, unemployment, denial of citizenship, and lack of common amenities, the Tatars are valiantly struggling to reclaim their cultural dignity. Indeed, the Krimsky Tatars are fighting to reclaim their homeland, statehood, and culture with a passion.

Memory and Myth

This reclaiming/reinventing/representing of Crimean Tatars has been wrought, I suggest, through three important factors. The primary reason for the success of the Tatars, is the result of their higher education, professional skills, and technological training acquired, ironically, under the vestiges of the former Soviet system of education with its high standards of excellence and competence. Paradoxically, the same Soviet communist regime which deported and denigrated them, and which they despised, has also provided excellent free education and training which has stood the Crimean Tatars in good stead in all their battles against the former Soviet system as well as the present Ukrainian government. As deportees and expatriates they understood the value of education. It has helped them to organize diligently and to plan intelligently in the concerted fight for their human and natural rights. As scientists, artists, researchers, intellectuals, writers, journalists, doctors, nurses, teachers, therapists, engineers, and technicians, educated in former Soviet institutions, the Crimean Tatars represent all professions and are thus able to use their various skills for the benefit of their own community when, and as needed.

Another great advantage that the Soviet education system provided for the Crimean Tatar deportees was the equal rights and education it gave to women. Unlike Muslim women in many other cultures, Crimean Tatar women are highly educated, highly skilled professionals who have taken leadership roles in promoting the Tatar cause and in setting educational priorities for their children.

12. Budzhurova, Lilya R., "The Current Socio-political Situation of the Crimean Tatars" *The Harriman Review* (Columbia University, New York), vol. 11, nos. 1-2, 1998.

13. Most settlements are situated outside cities since the Crimean Regional Soviet had passed a resolution in the early 1990s, limiting the number of resident permits in large cities and also prohibiting Tatars from residing in resort areas such as Yalta. This resolution has recently been rescinded.

Women represent some of the most impressive spokespersons, volunteers, community leaders, doctors and teachers I met during my visit to the Crimea as part of a recent "multicultural education mission" for the United Nations Development Program. Women as equals have played a major role in nation-building, in educating their children, in promoting cultural retrieval through the retelling of histories/stories, and in the revival of myths and memory. At home they have played a part in inculcating in the children, the inheritors of the homeland, a patriotic love of country and Tatar values, appreciation for dress, customs and language.

Though the former Soviet Education system denied Crimean Tatars the privilege of learning their own mother tongue, it taught them to excel in Russian, a language that they have continued to deploy effectively today. Fluency in Russian has given them an added linguistic advantage in representing themselves to the authorities and in communicating across the borders of former Soviet states and Eastern Europe. Crimean Tatars also understand the significance of learning English as a language of international communication and are using it effectively for internet technologies. The Tatar children are thus taught four languages from an early age–Russian, Ukrainian, Tatari, and English. A ten-year old boy volunteered to recite a poem in the Tatar language titled "Motherland" to welcome us to the school at Kamenka.

Secondly, another reason for the success won by the Crimean Tatars is their ingrained secularism. Secularism, which paradoxically was the cornerstone of the former Soviet education system and socialist culture, with its sense of respect for otherness and difference, informs Crimean Tatar thinking and actions as well as Ukrainian culture and life in general, despite incidents of racism and xenophobia. Though religious revival is a major aspect of Crimean Tatar life, only 39.2 percent observe religious rites and ritual. There are not many Muslim clergy or dogmatic *mullahs* among the ethnocultural group, although several mosques have been returned to the repatriates and many new mosques have been built. However, outside Muslim interests from Turkey and the Middle East have been making religious inroads through funding, teaching, and other assistance. Thanks to the solid basis of secularism of the Soviet era, the Tatars have been successful so far in preventing the onslaught of extreme Muslim fundamentalism, which no doubt has desperately been seeking entry. The teachings and leadership of secular, modernist intellectual and spiritual leaders of the Crimean Tatars, such as Ismael Bey Gasparali who is highly revered, has also prevented the rise of Muslim religiosity and fundamentalism. Indeed, secularism has been an extremely positive factor in preventing interethnic violence in the Crimea.

Thirdly, the diligent but perilous work of a highly acculturated group of repatriates and the intelligentsia in conjunction with the elected officials of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, a more radical and activist organization, has been responsible for attempting to build a whole new infrastructure with a strong system of education and equal rights and opportunities. Thus, intercultural mediation, political but peaceful agitation, prioritizing education, timely conflict prevention, and pro-active global intervention by NGOs and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) at the behest of the Ukrainian government, have assisted greatly in creating a balanced discourse and a Crimean Tatar ethnogenesis, despite the birth pains.

This cultural revival is carefully orchestrated by the international Crimean Tatar diaspora in the United States, Turkey, Germany, and other places, and the expatriates in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, comprised of educated and skilled persons who have concertedly helped in the dissemination of information, management of websites, protests to the proper international authorities, and in the playing out of memory and myth of the homeland through patriotic poetry, cultural retrieval, and the iconization of the Crimea as the "Green Island" (Yeshil Ada). Many of the repatriates and the members of the diaspora have never before lived in Crimea. Yet, the motif of the land, the mountains and the sea, drives their nationalistic passion.

At the UNDP school in Kamenka, Simferopol, there are no Crimean Tatar books, no curriculum, no learning materials that reflect the Tatar culture. Tatar histories and stories have been forgotten. Even the language has been largely lost. But the process of reclaiming and representing goes on. Equipped with dozens of donated pens, crayons and colored paper, I set to work with the students, encouraging a group of 8-12 year-olds to represent themselves in writing and drawing. As the retrieval of culture and identity is possible through the retelling, replaying and re-presentation of the 'story' in (hi)story, I ask the children to paint their lives. The recurring themes that emerge—images of the family, the sea and the mountains—reveal the kinds of things that all

children dream of— home, peace and love. Icons of a culture of hospitality and the Tatars' agrarian roots appear as recurring motifs of coffee (cava) pots and bunches of grapes on little tables in little houses, while the sun shines brightly through the blue mountains on children wearing Tatar costumes. It is interesting to see how these children define their sense of identity and homeland through the beautiful Crimean landscape. As Northrop Frye says in the context of Canadian literature, it is the sense of place that is the essence of a sense of identity.[14]

When I collected the drawings and stories and displayed them, the children excitedly exclaimed, " We've made a book"!" Having their efforts publicly displayed and valued was an important step in validating their experiences. Playing with symbols and images was the first step in re-presenting themselves.

At a roundtable a week later, I received a gift from the teacher, Nuriye – a set of "books" made by the kids to take back to Canada. "We have learned", said Nuriye in English, "that we can tell our own stories, make our own books, and write our own histories."

Integration and Development

In the small peninsula of Crimea with a population of only 2.5 million, there are 113 ethnic nationalities, making the question of peaceful integration more complex and increasing the potential for interethnic conflict. As Leonid Kravchuk, the first President of Ukraine, writes: "Recognizing the need for historical justice, a solution must be found which does not create new injustices... If radical solutions to this complicated issue were pursued, it would be hard to predict the future situation on the peninsula."[15] Historically, poverty and deprivation *per se* are not necessarily the triggers to unrest; but, when inequalities exist on the basis of ethnicity, religion, national identity, and economic class, or when peoples are exploited, or excluded from the process of governance, conflicts invariably arise. One Ukrainian scholar's worst-case scenario includes "Crimea's total secession, which would be economically inexpedient", or the creation of "enclaves of warring communities, such as those in Lebanon and Cyprus."[16]

This and other more serious situations have been pre-empted so far. In 1995, under the auspices of the United Nations Development Program and the Ukrainian government, the Crimea Integration and Development Program (UNDP/CIDP) was designed to facilitate the process of peaceful reintegration, conflict prevention, sustainable development, capacity building, education, and the construction of housing and infrastructure. With financial assistance and expertise from UNICEF, UNESCO, and several donor countries—Canada, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the Vatican—and some small NGOs such as the Canadian Cooperative Association, Hilfsfund Internationaler (Germany), Wardha Development Association (France), and the Centre for Science in Villages (India),[17] the difficult project of resettlement was initiated in the face of mounting prejudice.

The quiet, hopeful work that is going on in Crimea through the collective efforts of UNDP/CIDP and its international and local partners, has been largely successful so far thanks to the Tatars' own determination and the positive role of other stakeholders. The "particip/action" of individuals from the community who volunteer their services as teachers, social workers, counselors, and group leaders is very valuable for the strengthening of democratic values and in creating participatory approaches to development. At the community hall meeting, a respected member of the repatriated Tatars, Lutfiye, a handsome older woman wearing a fur hat, recites Crimean Tatar poetry with passion and vigor. She vividly recalls the day when she was a child of five and her mother and five siblings were pulled from their home and huddled into railway cars, bound for unknown destinations. But she brings a message of peace to the young students. She preaches co-existence and the intermingling of cultures: "We can see our original family houses down the valley, occupied by others. We don't want to take them, only to live peacefully as citizens building our own homes and lives."

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14. See Frye, Northrop, *The Bush Garden,*: Toronto: McLelland & Stuart, , 1981.

15. Leonid, Information Bulletin, *Krimsky Studii,* No.1, 2000.

16. Parakhonssky, Borys, Information Bulletin, *Krimsky Studii,* No. 1, 2000.

17. It is interesting that the big players, the UK, USA, and Russia, are conspicuous by their absence.

The CIDP's goals are to promote a culture of peace and stability in Crimea. Its five-point mandate is to (1) strengthen local capacity for development, (2) reduce socio-economic disparities based on ethnicity, (3) promote good governance through dialogue and participation, (4) raise tolerance through education and culture, and (5) target the most vulnerable, that is, women and young people. In June 2000, after a Tripartite review, the CIDP was extended for another four years so that it continue to perform its important role. It was decided that the program would be widened to cover three new geographic regions.

The CIDP works on a participatory democratic approach, with "dialogue" and "local participation" as key concepts in governance. Building up the human resources of the community to create leadership and initiate sustainable development, strengthening the capacity of communities to plan, mobilize, implement projects, to change attitudes, and build the capability of peoples to help themselves are all priorities. The CIDP contributes to bridging social and economic disparities among different ethnic groups by interventions in health, education, water supply, sanitation and flood control systems, as well as in the development of small and medium enterprises. The business development centers and the Revolving Loan Fund have provided opportunities for employment and income generation. The role and status of women in society has been a central focus of the project as has been the setting up of youth centers and camps to promote leadership and friendship among the young people from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds.

Phase I of CIDP (1995 to June 1998) saw the successful completion of the community school in Kamenka, one of the first settlements close to Simferopol, which I visited. This was a pilot project with the Sudak region, where flood control systems were constructed. In Kamenka, a new community outpatient clinic and potable water mains were also built. With the assistance of Turkey, the Tatars constructed a small mosque, which also serves as a social meeting place. Repairs were undertaken to buildings to set up an Armenian Cultural Center, and a Vocational Training Center. Several home-based schools were organized for pre-schooling as preparation for elementary schools, and for the acculturation of Crimean Tatar children.

Education and Acculturation

Education is rightfully considered a priority, with an emphasis on teacher-training and methodologies for multicultural, multilingual, and anti-racist education. It is seen as the primary means of building a nation of peace-loving citizens. The impressive UNDP school at Kamenka, built by the Tatars themselves, seems to be an oasis in a hostile environment, providing a meeting place for the children as well as the community. This multi-ethnic, multi-cultural elementary school is based on the principles of racial and gender equity and democratic participatory approach. The teachers are bright and dedicated and the students are neatly dressed and eager to learn. They speak Russian, Ukrainian, and the Tatar language, and are soon starting English lessons.

A cost-effective, community-based education model is practised by the CIDP. The community shares in providing home-based schooling premises, and is in charge of maintenance, cleaning and repairs, thus cutting costs. These home schools provide a safe haven for the integration of younger children to the new school environment and the dominant culture. This early education, which helps both the preschoolers and their parents to acculturate, is also a means for conflict prevention. During Phase II, from October 1998, several home-schools were established. A teacher-resource center "Mostik" (bridge), has also been created to provide teaching methodologies, training and resources to teachers. There is also an information and consulting center which provides assistance. A children's magazine, "Yildyzchik ('starlet') publishes children's poems and stories both in the Tatar language and in Ukrainian. Special seminars, camps and conferences are organized for the youth on leadership, conflict prevention skills, and human rights. Youth leaders have the opportunity to attend English-language classes and selected students take computer literacy courses. There is also a non-formal education center for the disabled and "at-risk" youth, which consists of an internet club and web sites. Crimean Tatar students attend university on the quota system, graduating in Medicine, Law and the Arts, Humanities and Sciences, doing much better than the national average.

The focus on youth is important as many of them are disenchanted and bored with the current state of affairs. They want to bring about immediate social change through more aggressive and violent means. To enable youth to understand the complex

questions, act responsibly, and think critically, it is very important to create a sense of stability and purpose. The young people I worked with seemed highly motivated, eager, and intelligent, but there were a few who felt strongly that more aggressive means were needed to gain equality and change the social system.

The mainstream, consolidated gymnasium-lyceum style school in Bakshiserai has 3000 elementary and high school students from all ethnic groups, but the majority are Ukrainian and Russian. The school seems to be fairly well-equipped, well-managed and lively with boisterous children and teenagers. With a large staff of teachers, including an Armenian and a Tatar, it is run by the ministry of education. It practices a "multicultural," multilingual education policy that equally values all cultures. The school had decided to mount a concert in honour of the foreign visitors. There was music, dance and drama representing the diverse cultures: the flamenco, Cossack dancing, tableaux, songs in several languages, and a Tatar play in traditional Tatar costumes, from a fable or folk tale. And there was the ballet, of course. But this exquisite performance was ingeniously mixed with Indian classical *bharatyanatam* within the ballet style. The costumes were designed with Indian motifs but were ballet-like.

This intermingling and normalizing of various cultural forms from the East and the West at a school performance was a pleasant experiment in intercultural representation. There was no exoticization here, or appropriation, just an aesthetic blending, a borrowing, and juxtaposition of the arts. But then, the "Other" seems to be valued here as the "supplement of knowledge," in Jacques Derrida's phrase[18] unlike the ingrained Eurocentrism of the typical curriculum that shuts out what Edward Said calls the "World as Text,"[19] excluding the Other from mainstream discourse.

In Yalta on the southeastern coast of the Black Sea, with its therapeutic waters and curative air of scented pines, there are no Crimean Tatar settlements: the local authorities had opposed their return by denying them land and resident permits. Yalta is famous for its Summer Palaces of the Tsars and the Yalta Treaty ending the Second World War, signed by Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt, at the beautiful Livadia Palace in 1945. The decisions taken at this historic meeting shaped the geopolitics that governed the world for half a century, including the fate of the Krimsky Tatars. Today the Crimean Tatars are involved in retrieving their own fate and in reclaiming/reinventing and re-presenting themselves.

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18. See Derrida, Jacques, *Positions*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

19. See Said, Edward, *The World, the Critic and the Text,* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988.

RUSSIA REASSESSED:
The Devil of Democratization Is in the Details

Troy McGrath

Christopher Marsh, *Russia at the Polls: Voters, Elections, and Democratization* (Washington: CQ Press, 2002).

Jeffrey Surovell, *Capitalist Russia and the West* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000).

Zoltan Barany and Robert G. Moser (editors), *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Christopher Marsh, Nikolas Gvosdev (editors), *Civil Society and the Search for Justice in Russia* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2002).

Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman (editors), *Developments in Russian Politics 5* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).

More than a decade after the implosion of the CPSU leadership (i.e., the Soviet system) the Western-style, free market Russia that many in the West desired has yet to appear. As the principal successor state to the Soviet Union, Russia currently resides in the twilight zone of both being ally and rival to the West, evolving as a complex political hybrid that defies precise categorization. It has also defied Western (predominantly American) attempts to assign it the role of quiescent and cooperative junior partner in Bush the Elder's "new world order." Of course, as Jeffrey Surovell argues throughout his provocative monograph, *Capitalist Russia and the West*, the days of superpower parity are long gone. Indeed, Surovell captures an important aspect of the new *status quo*, demonstrating throughout his treatise that Russia's dependency on the West "is not a totally harmonious, smooth, and mutually coordinated affair, but entails bargaining for advantage, give-and-take, even threat among the various parties."[1] This is reflected clearly by a recent statement in which President Putin emphasized "that Russia must learn to protect its position in a world characterized by extremely cruel competition, especially economically. Russia has no special claims in the world, but insists upon treatment commensurate with its history, potential and enormous size.[2] *Capitalist Russia and the West* comprises a thorough (indeed, year by year) accounting of Russia's slide from a power broker of highly heralded summits to the pawnbroker for conventional weapons and nuclear technology. The point of departure for Surovell's take on Russia is a deep grounding in dependency theory as well as class-based (mainly Marxist) approaches to politics and society. This leads to an inevitable stress on economic issues, both on the domestic and international levels. This is both a strength and a weakness, as Surovell endeavors to explain the post-Communist incarnation of Russia's social order in terms of the enduring struggle of international capital and labor.

Surovell's reliance on such extrinsic factors perhaps undervalues the self-destructive, reactionary impulses of Russian society that fuel the many conspiracy theorists in the Russian Federation who blame America for dragging it down. Despite the international sympathy following the events of

1. Surovell, *Capitalist Russia and the West*, p. 280.

2. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 110, part 1, 13 June 2002.

September 11, anti-Americanism in Russia intensified, mainly due to Russian perceptions of the widening military and economic gap between the two countries. According to a poll conducted by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion (VTsIOM) in March 2002, only 17 percent of Russians see the United States as a friendly state, while 71 percent held the opposite view. This was a sharp increase over the agency's 2001 poll on the same topic, in which only 44 percent felt the U.S. not to be a friend. The main reasons for increased anti-American sentiment were suspicions about NATO and Russia's failures in the Winter Olympic Games. Only 7 percent were willing to take the U.S. side in conflicts with Iraq, Iran, or Syria, while 20 percent feel that Russia should side with those countries.[3] Meanwhile, influential journalists and intellectuals have developed the habit of asserting their country's "decisive edge" over the U.S. in terms of culture and morals (loudly and publicly), haranguing the U.S. for its attempts to subvert Russian culture and values, and denouncing America for its "black ingratitude"—an oft-used term in the Russian media.[4] Even President Putin has engaged in cultural one-upmanship, dragging the Bushes through a crash course in Russian high culture during their visit to St. Petersburg. The nightly news on Russia's NTV "showed Putin's surprised look when President Bush took out his chewing gum while marveling at the decorations in the Kremlin."[5] Of course, rather than cultural one-upmanship this might simply be Putin's revenge for having to spend time at the presidential ranch in Crawford, Texas, in November 2001.

Such cultural exchanges aside, Russian perceptions of American culpability for their misfortunes remains problematic. This was particularly the case regarding instances such as the much-ballyhooed ice-skating controversy, and the disqualification of Russian athletes for alleged use of banned substances. The hysteria began when the figure skating results were revised and Russian skiers were removed from the competition on doping allegations. During the February 2002 Winter Olympics even the mainstream Russian media coverage was awash in accusations that the US was somehow working behind the scenes to undermine Russian athletes: "a wave of anti-Americanism of unseen might literally inundated Russian TV." Much of the Russian media pointed to an alleged conspiracy to humiliate Russia at the Olympics, charging that the U.S. ran the Games for its own benefit. So-called "anonymous forces" in the US supposedly bribed judges, shamelessly "stole medals from Russia," and fabricated doping charges against "innocent" Russian athletes, "literally sucking extra blood from them for unnecessary tests."[6]

Perhaps what is most striking about the "Olympic hysteria" was that it was fanned by Russian political officials at the highest levels, including Putin (who later backtracked) and members of the State Duma, who passed a resolution condemning the treatment of Russia and called for a boycott of the Games. This was followed by another round of hysterical anti-American propaganda, this time centered upon the bankruptcy of the famous Victor Kamkin Russian bookstore in New York City. Because no one had wanted to buy the two million Russian texts remaining in the store's inventory, the idea of simply destroying the books had been suggested. The Russian media seized upon the circumstances of the bankruptcy, as an attack on Russian culture: some deliberate American policy of burning Russian books.[7] Because media outlets throughout the Russian Federation receive some measure of government subsidy and/or have outside sponsors or private owners with political connections, editorial independence has been increasingly threatened. Officials exert political pressure, both at the national and regional levels, and with major media outlets increasingly controlled by big financial groups, media outlets inevitably reflect their political biases and the battles of the business concerns that control them. Freedom House's annual *Survey of Press Freedom* has consistently rated Russia "Partly Free" since 1992. Continued assaults

3. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, Volume 6, No. 46, Part I, 11 March 2002. The poll was conducted among 1,500 respondents in 44 regions of Russia.

4. Vladimir Shlapentokh, "The Rise of Russian Anti-Americanism after September 2001: Envy as a Leading Factor," *Johnson's Russia List*, #6227, 7 May 2002.

5. Peter Rutland, "Putin's Levitation Act," *Russia and Eurasia Review*, Volume 1, no. 1, 4 June 2002, Jamestown Foundation.

6. For a treatment of the anti-American tenor of the Russian media, particularly regarding the 2002 Winter Olympics, see Vladimir Shlapentokh, "The Rise of Russian Anti-Americanism after September 2001: Envy as a Leading Factor," *Johnson's Russia List*, #6227, 7 May 2002.

7. Vladimir Shlapentokh, "The Rise of Russian Anti-Americanism after September 2001: Envy as a Leading Factor," *Johnson's Russia List*, #6227, 7 May 2002.

upon the independence of media outlets have seriously eroded even this meager standard. Those media outlets that offer alternative viewpoints and analysis quickly find themselves facing substantial legal and financial obstacles. Journalists and media owners critical of the Putin regime come under intense scrutiny, including arbitrary audits, complicated legal battles, and occasionally even beatings (always by "unknown assailants").[8]

This state of affairs, however, has not engendered significant political or social protest: something difficult for many of us diehard "First Amendment" advocates to fathom. Most Russians seem relatively comfortable with "the media as a political player, rather than as an unbiased watchdog or commentator on political life." In fact, they even "expect television to instill a sense of pride about the country and find news coverage of Chechnya, corruption, crime, and other problems depressing and unpatriotic."[9] As Georgy Bovt points out, from about 1985 to 1992 media outlets (especially the press) enjoyed ever-expanding audiences and newly-found prestige. However, the period of market reforms brought with it increased production costs and more competition. Prices rose as incomes fell, opening up media outlets to a new set of commercial and political vulnerabilities. Moreover, the 1990s witnessed a sharp veering toward unprofessional, exploitative, and corrupt trends in journalism (a pattern not unknown in the West), further alienating the Russian public.[10] Journalists are generally seen by the public as little more than the front men for the media tycoons who looted the country's assets, building vast fortunes and patronage networks. Thus, they enjoy little sympathy or respect from the tens of millions who live at or near the poverty line. Indeed, the type of journalism upon which their media empires were built leaves a great deal to be desired. Moreover, business firms and other self-interested parties are able to procure almost any story they want on Russian television by resorting to bribes. Of course, there are many sincere, independent, hard-working journalists in Russia, even among the entities mentioned above, but their efforts are overshadowed and undermined by the manipulation of speech freedoms by both the government and its political rivals.[11]

Thus, it was likely a combination of factors, such as a desire to regain its appeal to a wide audience via patriotic themes, an inability to accept the fact of (or responsibility for) the decline of Russia's once internationally dominant athletic program, and one suspects political influence and opportunism, that yielded this past spring's virulent anti-Western (mainly anti-American) turn in the Russian press. Indeed, in a succinct chapter that deals with many of the myriad problems and temptations dogging the Russian media, Brad Owens strikes a somewhat more optimistic note regarding the trajectories and potential development of the fourth estate in the Russian Federation. He feels that "Russian journalists are beginning to come to terms with the high costs of 'selling out' to economic interests with political agendas."[12] Moreover, some journalists did resist the temptation to interpret Russia's lackluster Olympic performance as a triumph of America's principal foreign policy agenda; the continued subjugation and humiliation of great Russia. Curiously, factors such as the rampant corruption endemic in Russia's sports agencies, the lack of proper training facilities, and the pitiful underfunding by the government of aspiring athletes, were rarely cited as contributing elements to Russia's disappointing Olympic performance. Perhaps the phrase used by Russian journalist Irina Petrovskaya to describe the situation fits best: "Patriotism is the last refuge for a bad dancer."[13]

But while holding the line against imperialism's underhanded designs to weaken Mother Russia might be the preferred hobbyhorse of some portion of the leadership elite, the Russian foreign policy course entails a wider array of factors and actors. Alex Pravda's chapter on foreign policy in *Developments in Russian Politics* attempts to sort out the often incoherent and ambivalent post-Communist foreign policy trends of the former Superpower. Pravda, long one of the most astute

8. See my chapter in *Nations in Transit* on the political, economic, and social developments in Russia during 2001, published by Freedom House (Summer 2002).

9. Sarah Oates' chapter on "Politics and the Media," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, p. 266.

10. Georgy Bovt, "The Russian Press and Civil Society," in Marsh and Gvosdev, eds., *Civil Society and the Search for Justice in Russia*, pp. 97-98.

11. Editorial, "Free Media, Free of Crooks," *The Russia Journal*, issue 35 (78), 9 September 2000.

12. Brad Owens, "The Independent Press in Russia: Integrity and the Economics of Survival," in Marsh and Gvosdev, eds., *Civil Society and the Search for Justice in Russia*, p. 110.

13. Cited in Vladimir Shlapentokh, "The Rise of Russian Anti-Americanism after September 2001: Envy as a Leading Factor," *Johnson's Russia List*, #6227, 7 May 2002.

observers of the Russian foreign policy scene, analyzes Russian trends and actions in terms of policy towards the "near abroad" (i.e., the former Soviet republics) versus policy towards the "far abroad." Russian policies concerning the near abroad have in essence lacked requisite drive and effectiveness, and their overall weakness can be traced "to a combination of complacency, unclear roles and institutional ambiguities... neither simply a policy of aggressive neo-imperialism nor one of liberal cooperation."[14] For example, despite lingering antipathy toward their "Baltic brothers," for their alleged abuse of ethnic Russians,[15] the Russian diaspora in the FSU has never been a priority in Russian foreign policy. Early rumblings about "protecting Russians in Latvia and Estonia from human rights violations" yielded to tacit acknowledgment that ethnic Russians living in the Baltics states enjoy higher living standards than most citizens of the Russian Federation.[16]

Moreover, any talk of obstructing Baltic efforts to join the EU and NATO is no longer taken seriously. The same can likely be said of any real Russia-Belarus Union. As Surovell notes in his critique of Russia's abdication of a strong CIS, there has been a distinct slowdown in the Belarus-Russia rapprochement that had been pushed by Yeltsin, particularly a reticence to establish anything meaningful in terms of economic integration or supranational political bodies.[17] In June 2002 Putin was vocal in his criticism of proposals presented by Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenka concerning integration of the two countries, accusing Belarus of trying to recreate the USSR on the basis of Russia's economic might, emphasizing that the Belarussian economy equals just 3 percent of Russia's. He also rejected what he termed a "supranational organ with undefined functions," effectively setting aside proposals that were largely endorsed in the past by former President Boris Yeltsin.[18]

Indeed, it is the Caucasus and Central Asia that have most bedeviled Russian policy-makers. The collapse of the Soviet Union left the rump federation with large sections of undefended frontiers and neighbors too weak to secure the previously well-fortified Soviet borders; moreover, the new governments of the southern tier of the FSU have had difficulty quelling local conflicts and combating extremist influences. Moscow has alternately attempted harder (interventionist) and softer, more even-handed tactics in dealing with this portion of the near abroad. Recent events have again raised the possibility of military intervention to neutralize the threat posed by the presence of militants in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge, often a staging ground for extremist elements who operate in Chechnya. In any event, the costs of security have not been unsubstantial, and "Russia has had to bear the cost of security for the benefits of exercising control."[19]

Russian policy regarding the far abroad has also traversed a complex path of twists and turns, with President Putin embarking on a less than popular pro-American stance in the wake of September 11th. While Putin's course of cozying up to the West fits square with Jeffrey Surovell's argument that post-Communist Russian leaders knuckle under to the dictates of capital (and hence capital's military enforcer, the U.S.), the sudden turn did take some analysts by surprise. As Peter Rutland put it, "Putin talked the talk, but he also walked the walk, making a stream of hitherto unimaginable concessions."[20] Russian acquiescence to the unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the ABM treaty, to the stationing of American forces (and influence) into the FSU (especially Tajikistan and Georgia), to the expansion of NATO to include the Baltic states, not to mention the conduct of a war in neighboring (and former

14. Alex Pravda's chapter on "Foreign Policy," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, pp. 216, 218.

15. A poll conducted by the Institute of Sociology and reported by *The St. Petersburg Times* on 4 September 2001 found that 20% of the residents of the northern capital view Estonia and Lithuania as enemies of Russia, and that 25% have that opinion of Latvia. Outside the city, in Leningrad Oblast, the poll found, those figures were even higher. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 5, no. 170, part 1, 7 September 2001.

16. For example, the Latvian magazine *Klubs*, which regularly publishes lists of the country's wealthiest people, reports that nearly half of Latvia's some 100 millionaires are Russian speakers. Valentinas Mite, "Latvia: Russian Speakers Hold Their Own On The Business Front," *RFE/RL Report*, Prague, 17 May 2002.

17. Surovell, *Capitalist Russia and the West*, p. 258.

18. See *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 111, part 1, 14 June 2002; and *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 118, part 1, 25 June 2002. For more on this, see Jan Maksymiuk, "A Union Fractured," *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 114, part 1, 19 June 2002.

19. Alex Pravda's chapter on "Foreign Policy," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, pp. 222-223. The quote is on p. 223.

20. Peter Rutland, "Putin's Levitation Act," *Russia and Eurasia Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, 4 June 2002, Jamestown Foundation.

client) Afghanistan, certainly provides grist for those who argue that Russia is selling out to the West.

In fact, I would argue that given such a weak hand (due to Russia's poor economic situation, lack of powerful allies, and the deterioration of its military establishment), the Russian President has done well. The long overdue shift from pretensions of a détente-era global superpower to a more tenable role as a European power better suit Russia's capabilities, if not its nostalgic sensibilities. The replacement last year of Defense Minister Igor Sergeev with Sergei Ivanov, a KGBist and close Putin ally, as well as the removal of General Leonid Ivashov as head of the Defense Ministry's international department augurs well for such changes. Likewise, the naming of a (female!) civilian to oversee the army budget is a positive step. On the global scale, then, Russia simply cannot contend for parity with the U.S., but in specific regions (especially in the Caucasus and in Central Asia), Russia in fact can function as a senior partner to its Western allies. Indeed, an increasingly stretched U.S. military welcomes Russia's help in such troublesome areas. Taking its cue from the positional shifts of the UK and France in the post-World War II years, Russia might be able to carve out a juicy role in the new world order, one based on such a notion of global cooperation and regional (though not international) parity between Russia and the United States.[21]

Of course the question of just how long Putin can keep up this pro-Western position in spite of the prevailing opinions in Russian society still remains. This is particularly true given the intractability of Russia's domestic political scene. It is on issues relating to such themes that concerns the bulk of the works and authors reviewed here. A set of issues that perhaps bridges the gap between domestic and international policy spheres is the deteriorating state of the Russian military and the (not unrelated) war in Chechnya. The post-Communist Russian military, as Zoltan Barany illustrates in his effective chapter-length study, has become "a weak, disorganized institution marked by low morale and pitiful material conditions."[22] The rank and file had never understood what was expected of them in the era of *glasnost* and *perestroika*; and the vacillations and indecision of Gorbachev's policies and the clear defeat in Afghanistan cost the military establishment its prestige, privileges and political clout. The Yeltsin era meant further unpredictability and disorientation for the military, as organizational shifts and informal political power arrangements combined with budgetary cuts to enfeeble the once mighty military-industrial complex. This trend was exacerbated by another disastrous war in Chechnya (1994-96) and Yeltsin's *divide et imperia* strategy of creating multiple military establishments, which vied for both funds and power.[23] Military life under Putin shows little improvement. Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin reported on May 30, 2002, that "the situation in the Russian Army is worse than critical," that the military is riddled by embezzlement and plunder, arguing that if radical measures are not taken "the declining level of its combat readiness may become irreversible."[24]

Conscription rates have fallen precipitously while desertion rates and instances of corruption and abuse within the military have skyrocketed. The acting head of the General Staff's Organizational-Mobilization Department, Colonel General Vasily Smirnov, announced that only 11 percent of draftees called up in the course of the 2002 spring draft were suitable for the military service.[25] In June, Prosecutor-General Ustinov reported to the Federation Council that criminal investigations are under way concerning 19 senior military officers who "exceeded their authority, took possession of state property, or disposed improperly of state property."[26] At the lower end of the spectrum, 46 percent of Russian soldiers live at or below the poverty line, and as of the third week of July 2002, about 1.2 million officers and soldiers still had not received their wages for June. According to one soldier quoted in the German daily *Die Welt*, "we

21. On this notion of regional parity, see Nikolai Zlobin, "Being a junior partner to the US is not demeaning: Russia just needs to understand where its interests coincide with American interests," *World Energy Policy Journal*, #4, June 2002 <www.wep.ru> Available on *Johnson's Russia List*, #6317, 20 June, 2002.

22. Zoltan Barany, "Politics and the Russian Armed Forces," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization*, p. 175.

23. Zoltan Barany, "Politics and the Russian Armed Forces," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization*, pp. 177, 186-187.

24. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 101, part 1, 31 May 2002.

25. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 128, part 1, 11 July 2002. He also noted that 20% of draftees have only an elementary-school education and about 7% have criminal records.

26. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 111, part 1, 14 June 2002.

live worse than homeless people, and this can't continue any longer."[27] The lack of funds seriously undermines current discussions about shifting the military to a professional-contract basis, a subject that continues to be bandied about. If Barany is correct in his findings that Russian military forces are characterized by poor training, insufficient maintenance of aging equipment, and unprofessional behavior, that conscripts (that is, those who don't run away) are deployed for berry-picking, mushrooming and harvesting in order to procure sufficient food, and that "hundreds of thousands of soldiers must serve without proper uniforms, boots, and basic equipment," I doubt that the best and the brightest will be likely to enlist in any future professional army.[28]

The current war in Chechnya merely exacerbates an already dire situation. Originally popular with a Russian public weary of continued terrorist acts, kidnapping, and lawlessness emanating from Chechnya, the war grinds on, albeit with decreasing support and seemingly no end in sight. In April 2002 Putin was quoted as follows: "Regarding Chechnya, the military phase is over thanks to the bravery of the army and special task forces."[29] Perhaps he was studying films of General Westmoreland reassuring the American public about Vietnam before Tet (1968), since the resistance in Chechnya shows no signs of abating. In fact, this past summer Putin even named a new commander for the Joint Federal Forces in Chechnya, Lieutenant General Sergei Makarov. The new commander certainly has his work cut out for him. While performing far better than in the previous Chechen War, Russian forces have yet to see the light at the end of the tunnel. The Russian government compares its fight with separatist rebels to the U.S. war against terrorism in Afghanistan. Of course, the fact that Russian forces have been accused of repeated violations of human rights including murder, rape, theft, kidnapping and extortion make the comparison a stretch. Consequently, various journalists, representatives of human rights organizations, and international political leaders (e.g., recent comments by Mary Robinson and Joschka Fischer), continue to criticize Moscow for abuses committed by Russian forces.

Despite sagging enthusiasm for Putin's Chechnya crusade, the Russian president retains widespread support. According to the latest (Summer 2002) VTsIOM poll, 73 percent of Russians approve of President Putin's performance, a figure that has changed little over the past two years.[30] This is perhaps due to the dearth of alternatives, as no other figure enjoys significant national support. Christopher Marsh makes clear in his study of elections and voters in Russia that Russian democracy has yet to face a real "turnover test," since Boris Yeltsin yielded the power to Putin, in a legal, but dubious scenario that disadvantaged an already fractured democratic-reformist elite and a Communist opposition still unable to transform social and economic deprivation into political control. Still, one must give credit where credit is due. Putin ran an outstanding campaign, avoiding televized debates and refusing to provide specific policy prescriptions, remaining "above politics," and capitalizing on his role in executing the initial "revenge phase" of the Second Chechen War.[31]

Whether or not Russian democratization suffered as a result of the tainted presidential elections of 1996 and 2000 remains to be seen, but Russia's citizenry clearly supports the current president. Since the presidency was handed over to him at the beginning of 2000, Putin has shown himself at times to be a skillful politician, while at other times more the heavy-handed autocrat. As is clear from Robert Moser's excellent review of the subject in *Russian Politics*, Putin's popularity has allowed for a substantial change in the nature of executive-legislative relations in Russia. Consequently, Yeltsin's political weakness in the final years of his tenure "was not institutionalized into a lasting redistribution of power between the executive and legislative branches."[32] In fact, it is in the treatment of the diverse areas that make up the wider framework of government that the authors under review here make their strongest contribution.

27. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 136, part 1, 23 July 2002.

28. Zoltan Barany, "Politics and the Russian Armed Forces," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization,* pp. 208, 211.

29. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 73, part 1, 18 April 2002.

30. VTsIOM (All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion) surveyed 1,600 people in 33 Russian regions. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 144, part 1, 2 August 2002. For a critique of the methods and results of blatantly pro-Putin polling, see the article by Alexander Nadzharov in *Novye Izvestia,* 28 November 2001.

31. Christopher Marsh, *Russia at the Polls: Voters, Elections, and Democratization*, pp. 111-118.

32. Robert Moser, "Executive-Legislative Relations in Russia, 1991-1999," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization,* p. 97.

Thomas Remington and Matthew Wyman's chapters on legislative process and voters in *Developments in Russian Politics* provide valuable material to complement nicely both the Marsh book (mentioned above) and the analytical chapter by Michael McFaul of Russian electoral trends in the Barany and Moser volume.

A specific theme that permeates analyses of contemporary Russian society is the notion of the "rule of law," which impacts the crucial areas of economic reform, crime and corruption, civil society, and the sense of justice. Russia's constitution gives the president unusually strong powers, including the right to issue legally binding decrees and directives, as well as to appoint senior members of the judicial and executive branches. Presidential decrees and directives may, like other laws, be appealed to the Constitutional Court if held to violate the constitution. However, the Court does not have the right to select issues for consideration on its own initiative, and the range of those bodies that may submit issues to it is limited. Even when the Constitutional Court has made a ruling, no mechanism exists for enforcing the ruling. In general, court rulings do not constitute a source of legislation under the Russian legal system.[33]

Post-Communism has witnessed soaring rates of street crime plague Russian society, while organized crime groups operate with impunity. For example, carjackers stole the $100,000 BMW used by the wife of Interior Minister Boris Gryzlov in broad daylight in St. Petersburg on July 31, 2002. The thieves allegedly sprayed mace in the face of the driver as he waited near Gryzlov's apartment and made off with the car.[34] According to Louise Shelley, the criminal justice system reveals very selective enforcement of the law with most individuals arrested for crimes from the lowest economic and social levels of society.[35] In many cases, however, the poorer defendants receive little in the way of useful legal assistance because funds are lacking to pay for trial attorneys and many public defenders are poorly trained. In his thorough assessment of the development of a law-based state in the Russian Federation, Gordon Smith emphasizes that laws and codes are not sufficient for the rule of law to exist, that also necessary are sufficient funds, equipment, personnel, and other resources to function effectively.[36] Herein lies much of the problem for post-Communist Russia. Overall, judicial independence in Russia is seriously threatened by the chronic lack of funding. Local courts have problems meeting their wage bills, buying equipment, paying telephone bills, and undertaking building repairs. This makes them easy targets for bribery and corruption.[37] Some Union of Right Forces deputies in the Duma have called for extensive judicial-legal reform regarding current methods of financing the courts, as well as for large sums of money to be allotted to intensify and speed up judicial reform. Judges such as Sergei Pashin harbor strong doubts about the Kremlin's dedication to reforming the legal system, since, in the words of Pashin "the government's financial decisions so far show that legal reform is far from being a priority."[38] As part of a major judicial reform, a new Criminal Procedure Code came into force on July 1, 2002, aimed at enhancing the rights of suspects by requiring warrants for searches and arrests. It also stipulates that a first interrogation of a suspect be held within 24 hours of detention, and that the suspect has the right to consultation with an attorney prior to it. The new code also attempts to give more power to defense attorneys by allowing them to conduct independent investigations of the case.[39]

While most analysts focus upon the institutions and laws necessary for the functioning of a market democracy in Russia, there is a conceptual element

33. For example, Moscow's Mayor Luzhkov has been able to ignore numerous rulings by the Constitutional Court which say by retaining the notorious Soviet-era *propiska*, or system of residence permits, his administration is violating Federation citizens' constitutionally-guaranteed right to freedom of movement.

34. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 142, part 1, 31 July 2002.

35. Louise Shelley's chapter on "Crime and Corruption," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, pp. 239, 243.

36. Gordon Smith, "Russia and the Rule of Law," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, pp. 222-223. The quote is on p. 112.

37. Judges frequently were paid bonuses by governors out of their regional budgets. For example, until last year Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov paid judges regular bonuses of $100-200/month to supplement their inadequate federal wages. Thus it is not surprising that while Luzhkov was providing the bonuses, he did not lose a single case he brought against newspapers that criticized him. Last fall, the Kremlin publicly criticized Luzhkov for this practice. Sophie Lambroschini, "Judge's Dismissal Underlines Problems Facing Russian Judiciary," *RFE/RL Newsline*, Volume 4, No. 205, Part I, 23 October 2000.

38. Sophie Lambroschini, "Judge's Dismissal Underlines Problems Facing Russian Judiciary," *RFE/RL Newsline*, vol. 4, no. 205, part 1, 23 October 2000.

39. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 123, part 1, 2 July 2002.

to the "rule of law" dilemma as well. Steven Fish stakes out a clearly American-centric view of Russian society, asserting that an overwhelming proportion of citizens do not regard subordinating themselves to the laws as obligatory or even desirable, and emphasizing their contempt for the mundane but crucial rules and laws that regulate daily life. "Just as state officials ignore citizens' preferences, so too do citizens ignore the state's dictates." [40] Hence the argument made by Louise Shelley that "the pervasive corruption and the penetration of organized crime into the state and economy cannot be explained only by the failure to create institutions and norms."[41]

After decades of a restrictive Communist order, a general societal contempt for law and for government should not have come as a surprise. This has been exacerbated by perceptions in Russia that market democracy, despite its great promises, has impoverished a once great society.

True, a small stratum of society has garnered great wealth, but the fruits of capitalism have yet to "trickle down" to the bulk of the population. Despite a recovering economy, Russian society remains divided between the very "haves" and the "have-nots." The income gap in Russia reached levels of disparity characteristic of many African countries, while life expectancy fell so precipitously that Russia now ranks 60th in the world, according to UN statistics.[42] Perhaps the market system itself is less to blame than those who were responsible for its implementation. This includes both Russian and Western policy-makers and advisers. In an excellent critique of the course of economic reform in the 1990s, Yoshiko Herrera convincingly shows how both advisers and reformers failed to approach economic reform with a proper appreciation of the complexity of markets, that is, as they *actually exist* in capitalist economies. In Herrera's words, "the superior ability of markets in handling economic problems was not replicated in the post-socialist Russian context simply by the quick transfer of outdated, but ideologically appealing, metaphors."[43] Herrera goes on to explain that the lack of effective regulations and institutions necessary for monitoring the market have contributed greatly to two of Russia's most intractable current problems, widening income inequality and criminalization on a massive scale.[44]

Crime, corruption, and the mafiazation of the economy are now associated, and tacitly accepted, as part and parcel of the free market system. The per capita murder rate has doubled since 1990 and is the highest in the world, three times more than the U.S. and four times more than France.[45] Corruption and extortion pervade everyday life in Russia; people routinely pay bribes in order to conduct their affairs, and government officials routinely accept and even demand them.[46] Ordinary people are required to pay bribes to get a bed in a hospital, to obtain proper medicine or an operation, to get a passport or driver's license or to register one's place of residence. Recent surveys show that 75 percent of all Russian officials take bribes, but only 0.4 percent of them are punished in any way.[47] In an April 2002 report, Prosecutor-General Vladimir Ustinov sharply criticized law enforcement agencies and especially the Interior Ministry (MVD) for ineptness in combating corruption. The report states that while the MVD knows about widespread corruption among state officials, including holders of the highest offices, most anticorruption investigations deal only with lower-level corruption.[48] As the President of the INDEM Center for Applied Political Studies Georgy Satarov points out, "Corruption is not just an ethical problem or a criminal one....it is above all a problem of the ineffectiveness of government."[49]

On the positive side of the ledger, the wild capitalism of the 1990s that allowed the redistribution of hundreds of billions worth of property through controversial, and blatantly unfair, privatization deals, has essentially ended, and

40. M. Steven Fish, "Conclusion: Democracy and Russian Politics," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization,* p. 225.

41. Louise Shelley, "Crime and Corruption," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, p. 245.

42. See the article by Stanislav Kondrashov in *Vremya MN* on 3 August 2002.

43. Yoshiko Herrera, "Russian Economic Reform," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics*, p. 164.

44. Yoshiko Herrera, "Russian Economic Reform," in Barany and Moser, eds., *Russian Politics*, pp. 141, 161, 164.

45. John O'Mahony, *The Guardian (UK)*, 3 February 2001.

46. See for example, Jeremy Bransten, "Russia: Corruption Continues To Thrive, Say Researchers," *RFE/RL Report*, Prague, 4 June 2002.

47. Kommersant-Vlast, 30 October 2001.

48. See Roman Kupchinsky, "Crime in Russia: 2001," *Crime, Corruption & Terrorism Watch,* 9 May 2002, vol. 2, no. 18.

49. The quote comes from Jeremy Bransten, "Russia: Corruption Continues To Thrive, Say Researchers," RFE/RL Report, Prague, 4 June 2002.

analysts have cautiously begun to say that Russia has moved from a developing to a developed market economy. The country is now poised to enter a stage of economic development in which respecting minor shareholders' rights and maintaining transparency standards are deemed to be useful. This belief is reflected in the recent U.S. decision to certify Russia as a market economy, a move seen as a step forward in Russia's quest to join the World Trade Organization.[50] The leaders of the G-7 countries decided to upgrade Russia's status to full membership in the group by 2006. In addition, Russia will host a special meeting of G-8 members in 2004, and the 2006 G-8 summit will be held in St. Petersburg.[51] On the domestic front, new legal codes on taxation, land, and inheritance rights also have been signed into law. Combined with the late 2001 reforms of the judicial system, Russia appears to be taking some of the constructive, pro-business steps that Boris Yeltsin was either unable or unwilling to embrace.

Of course, if there is one thing that capitalism has shown, it is that what is good for "business" is not necessarily good for the general population. Market democracy, in the view of many Russians, replaced a restrictive, egalitarian order with widespread poverty, rampant crime, unemployment, an overwhelmed health-care system, and environmental pollution. While this assessment might not be entirely accurate, perceptions are important since acceptance and faith in the socio-political order are key elements in societal stability. Judith Shapiro's chapter on health and healthcare policies in Russia argues that much of what was done (or not done) in the late Soviet period is responsible for much of the current health crisis in Russia.[52] However, it is the period and policies of the Yeltsin-era shock therapists that still receive most of the blame for Russia's social and economic woes.

The economic and social upheaval that has characterized the years following Communism's collapse in the former Soviet bloc is evident in nearly every aspect of life, perhaps most keenly felt in declining health care across the post-Soviet spectrum.[53] Child mortality is two to three times higher in Russia than in Western European countries, and Russian mortality figures overall are at the highest levels since World War II. The World Health Organization estimates that Russia now spends $251 per person per year on healthcare, compared with almost $1,700 per person per year in the European Union. Russia ranks 130th in the world for overall health system performance.[54] It is estimated that 700,000 abandoned children cram the woefully inadequate orphanage system, more than the number in the entire Soviet Union after the Second World War.[55] A truly disturbing fact is that most Russians living below the poverty line are actually employed, which is not the case in Western countries.[56]

Whether or not responsibility for the continued social crises plaguing Russia will be attributed to President Putin, who has thus far avoided blame for the poor state of Russian society, is another intriguing question. Perhaps the answer will be discerned through the ballot boxes when Putin comes up for re-election. However, as Christopher Marsh makes clear, "the success of democracy does not simply depend on whether elections are held according to schedule."[57] This general theme is explored in greater depth in the various chapters of the Marsh and Gvosdev volume, *Civil Society and the Search for Justice in Russia*. The authors of the volume examine diverse aspects and issue areas related to the role of civil society in contemporary Russia, including chapters on the experience of women, the marginalized voices of ethnic minorities, and the notion of "managed pluralism" and religion. After acknowledging the need of a substantial role of civil society for a democratic system to operate, the authors discuss whether Russian civil society is up to the tremendous task it faces. For example, one avenue of civil society, the NGO sector, provides some reason for encouragement. It has developed substantially over the past decade, such that in November 2001 the government organized a Civic Forum in an effort to manage the 300,000

50. *RFE/RL Report*, "Russia: Market Economy Recognized by US," Moscow, 7 June 2002.

51. *RFE/RL NEWSLINE*, vol. 6, no. 120, part 1, 27 June 2002.

52. Judith Shapiro, "Health and Health care Policy," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, pp. 205-212.

53. Alexandra Poolos, "East: Taking The Pulse Of Post-Soviet Health Care (Part 1)," *RFE/RL Report*, Prague, 22 March 2002.

54. Kathleen Knox, "Russia: Unhealthy Mothers in Russia Get Babies off to a Poor Start (Part 4)," *RFE/RL Report*, Prague, 22 March 2002.

55. Mike Thompson, *Detroit Free Press*, 23 November 2001.

56. *Trud-7*, 26 July 2001.

57. Christopher Marsh, *Russia at the Polls*, p. 147.

nongovernmental organizations registered with the Justice Ministry. Meeting for two days in the Kremlin State Palace in Moscow, Civic Forum gathered together 5,000 activists from NGOs across Russia. President Putin addressed the gathering on its first day, assuring delegates that civil society could not be formed at the initiative of the government. To some, government attempts to co-opt civil society give rise to the fear that the government aimed to create surrogate, parallel structures of its own to compete with any independent social organizations.[58]

How much of Russia's democratization efforts are legitimate, and how much of it is simply window-dressing, is an incredibly important avenue of inquiry, as Russia's path to democratization (or even the desire to proceed in that direction) is not yet assured. Zvi Gitelman's concluding chapter for *Developments in Russian Politics* strikes a cautious (and I believe astute) note by suggesting that there is no reason to assume either the inevitability or impossibility of a democratic Russia. He posits that Russian democratization efforts have been halted at the creation stage, a development (or rather, lack of development) that he attributes in great part "to the contradictory nature of Yeltsin's impulses," as well as to the fact that neither Yeltsin nor Putin "has even tried to form an institutionalized constituency for democracy.[59]

So, where does this leave us, or rather, where does this leave Russia? In part, we can agree with Gordon Smith, that "the transition from communism experienced in Russia, rather than expanding the state's capacity to make and implement policy, has resulted in the creation of political vacuums, institutional malaise, chaos, and lawlessness."[60] A harsh assessment, but not far off the mark, particularly if one uses Western democracies as the benchmark. But while utilizing external models and conceptions might best capture Russia's movement toward becoming a "Western power," it might not be the best method of gauging the political, economic and social aspirations of the citizens of the Russian Federation. In fact, most Russians (oligarchic elite and new Russians excluded) reject the imperialistic arrogance of "democratic values," the anti-intellectual proclivities of Western mass culture (such as is reflected in mainstream television and films), and the soulless worship of acquisition that seems to drive the Western societies.

Consequently, conceptions of what a modern democratic order should look like, especially in terms of social justice and true freedom (which includes economic rights as well as voting rights), must be worked out within and among the peoples of the Russian Federation, not imported from (or foisted upon them) militarily superior allies, regardless of how well-meaning or self-assured those new friends might be. Slavic communalism, Soviet egalitarianism, not to mention many centuries of Russian culture and values, will likely form the basis of Russian society in the new millenium. This is as it should be. The authors reviewed here have employed a wide array of methods, concepts, theories and approaches to analyze the myriad aspects of contemporary society, providing great insight into the democratic development of the West's newfound partner and erstwhile ally. They tell us a great deal about where Russia is, and how things reached the point that they have. But as Christopher Marsh points out in *Russia at the Polls*, "more than a decade of democratic reforms has made abundantly clear, Russia's history is far from over."[61]

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58. Vremya novostei, 12 July 2001.

59. Zvi Gitelman, "Russian Democratisation in Comparative Perspective," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, p. 302.

60. Gordon Smith, "Russia and the Rule of Law," in White, Pravda, and Gitelman, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 5*, pp. 222-223. The quote is on p. 112.

61. Christopher Marsh, Russia at the Polls: Voters, Elections, and Democratization, (Washington: CQ Press, 2002), p. xi.